

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An airbag for protecting an occupant, comprising:
 - a left half airbag to be deployed on a left side of the occupant,
 - a right half airbag to be deployed on a right side of the occupant, said left and right half airbags being separated from each other, and
 - a width constraining device attached to an inner middle area inside the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively, said width constraining device constraining lateral widths of the respective left half airbag and right half airbag when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated,

wherein said width constraining device comprises a first constraining device disposed inside the left half airbag, and a second constraining device disposed inside the right half airbag, said first and second width constraining devices being arranged to extend substantially horizontally along one line perpendicularly to a direction that the left and right half airbags extend to the occupant.
2. (currently amended) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein each of said width first and second constraining device devices is formed of a string.
3. (canceled)
4. (currently amended) ~~An airbag according to claim 1, for protecting an occupant, comprising:~~
 - ~~a left half airbag to be deployed on a left side of the occupant,~~
 - ~~a right half airbag to be deployed on a right side of the occupant, and~~
 - ~~a width constraining device attached to an inner middle area inside the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively, said width constraining device constraining lateral widths of the respective left half airbag and right half airbag when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated,~~

wherein said left half airbag and right half airbag have distal ends facing the occupant, said distal ends being separated from each other so that a space is formed between the distal ends facing the occupant when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.

5. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said left half airbag is connected to the right half airbag at midsections thereof in a direction that the left half airbag and the right half airbag deploy.

6. (previously presented) An airbag according to claim 1, further comprising a vertical width constraining device, said vertical width constraining device constraining vertical widths of the left half airbag and the right half airbag disposed inside the respective left and right half airbags when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are deployed.

7. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said left half airbag and said right half airbag includes an inclined upper portion so that the one of the left half airbag and the right half airbag does not contact an interior of a vehicle when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.

8. (currently amended) An airbag according to claim 1, comprising:

~~a left half airbag to be deployed on a left side of an occupant,
a right half airbag to be deployed on a right side of the occupant, and
width constraining means attached to an inner middle area inside the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively, for constraining lateral widths thereof when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated,~~

wherein at least one of said left half airbag and said right half airbag includes a portion having a thickness gradually decreasing upwardly when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.

9. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said left half airbag and said right half airbag have distal ends thereof separated by a distance of 150 - 350 mm when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are deployed.

10. (previously presented) An airbag according to claim 1, further comprising a base communicating with the left and right half airbags, said left and right half airbags separately projecting outwardly from the base.

11. (original) An airbag apparatus comprising the airbag according to claim 1 and an inflator for inflating the airbag.

12. (previously presented) An airbag according to claim 1, further comprising a connecting portion connecting the left half airbag to the right half airbag at midsections thereof in a direction that the left half airbag and the right half airbag deploy, and a distance between a rear end of the deployed airbag and the connecting portion being in the range of about 30% to about 70% of a length from the rear end to a front end of the deployed airbag.

13. (canceled)

14. (currently amended) An airbag according to claim ~~13~~ 1, wherein said first and second constraining devices are connecting belts for limiting expansion of the left and right half airbags ~~in a direction substantially perpendicularly to a direction that the left and right half airbags extend to the occupant.~~

15-16. (canceled)

17. (new) An airbag according to claim 10, wherein said base is integrally formed with the left and right half airbags as a part of the airbag.

18. (new) An airbag according to claim 17, wherein said left and right half airbags have connecting portions for connecting each other at midsections between the base and distal ends of the left and right half airbags, said connecting portions being spaced from the base to form a non-connecting space between the base and the connecting portions.

19. (new) An airbag according to claim 18, wherein said left and right half airbags have joint

allowances at portions facing each other, at which said left and right half airbags are connected.

20. (new) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein each of the left and right half airbags comprises panels arranged vertically to face each other, and the first and second constraining devices comprises seams for connecting the respective panels facing each other.

21. (new) An airbag according to claim 20, further comprising a connecting belt for connecting the left and right half airbags to restrict lateral expansions thereof.

22. (new) An airbag according to claim 21, wherein the panels for forming each of the left and right half airbags have holes passing therethrough to be located inside the seams, said connecting belt passing through the holes and being connected to outsides of the left and right half airbags at ends of the connecting belt.